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Consumers' League of
New York City

Behind the scenes in a
hotel

New York

1922

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BEHIND THE SCENES

IN A

HOTEL

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PUBLISHED — FEBRUARY, 1922

BY

The Consumers' League of New York

289 FOURTH AVENUE

NEW YORK CITY



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BEHIND THE SCENES IN A HOTEL

The modern hotel industry, claimed by the 35th Convention of the New York Hotel Association to be the fifth largest industry in the United States, is of comparatively recent growth. It is true that from

Growth of the hotel industry

the earliest times there have been inns and small hostels for the accommodation of the

wayfarer. But this accommodation was the simple provision of board and lodging. The host and his family ran the house much as the modern boarding and rooming house is run. Until the late nineteenth century these houses, small and few in number, were usually at stage-coach changes along the road. With the great increase in travel, stimulated by the growth of steam railroads, hotels sprang up in great numbers and tended to concentrate in large centers of population. The invention of the elevator and the use of fireproof materials have made possible the construction of gigantic modern edifices. In the last few decades, under these conditions, more and more capital has been attracted to the industry until today there are 40,000 hotels, large and small, in the United States.

The individual hotel has developed into a complex institution, often of colossal size, supplying board and lodging on a most luxurious scale. In all parts of New York State, particularly in the smaller cities and towns, the small hotel with the inn tradition, with a simple table d'hôte service at one rate, still exists. But the tendency in New York City and in first and second class cities of the State has been toward a rapid expansion in the size of the individual establishment with an elaboration of service, and a specialization of hotel types. In the larger cities of the State, there are hotels with 450 or more rooms; in New York City there are many hotels with from 1000 to 2000 rooms. The largest hotel in New York, "the largest hotel in the world," by its own advertisement, contains 2200 rooms and 2200 baths. In answer to the special needs of special groups, different types of hotels have

sprung up—the commercial-transient hotel which supplies complete, efficient but unelaborate service, the apartment house and family hotel with additional comforts and luxuries for residents of a longer period, the ultra-fashionable hotel, and the hotel that specializes in banquets, conventions and other social functions. No distinct classification holds, for there is usually an overlapping of types.

As the individual hotel has grown, hotel corporations and syndicates have developed. In New York City the largest, most complete hotels, almost without exception, are operated by hotel corporations. Two companies are each managing five of the largest hotels. Another company manages five hotels, two of which are in first class cities of New York State and three in other states. One company manages a group of fifteen smaller family hotels in New York City. Four hotels in four different up-state cities are managed by still another company. These corporation managers have united to form the New York State Hotel Men's Association and the Hotel Association of New York City for discussion of standards of operation. This exchange of opinion has resulted in the turning of hotel managers' thoughts to standards and policies in regard to labor, though as yet little of a concrete nature has been accomplished.

The labor force required to furnish service in the modern hotel has necessarily increased enormously since the day when the host of the old-time hostel and his family personally cared for the needs of their guests. The following extract from a hotel manager's pamphlet on the running of big hotels gives some idea of the problems of labor management: "The operation of a single metropolitan hotel is too complex an undertaking to be likened to a gigantic piece of housekeeping. When it comes to running a group of six of the largest hotels in the world * * * the performance becomes of colossal size. The idea of employing 570 men just to cook food and another 925 just to wait on table, finding need at the same time to call in an average of 3000 waiters a month to help out on banquets, requiring 380 chambermaids

to make beds and so on, must strike one pretty much as indicative of doing business on a wholesale scale."

Hotel managers, however, have been too prone to treat their business as housekeeping on a big scale. The transition from the small home industry with a few paying guests has been too rapid for adjustment to large scale method and standards. The attention of the hotel management, so far, has been directed toward standards of service to the public. It has only begun to think of standardization of conditions of employment for workers. It is perhaps the most backward and unregulated of industries from the point of view of wages, hours and living conditions, and comparable only with domestic service. It is one of the few industries which continues to house its employees as a part of the wage payment. It is one of the few industries in which tipping or the giving of gratuities to workers by the public persists.

There are inherent in the business certain definite obstacles to standardization of labor conditions. The most serious of these is that it is an almost continuous industry where work is carried on for eighteen of the twenty-four hours with peaks of greater volume throughout the day. The hotel managers, however, have not as yet put their best effort into solving this problem and to working out standardized conditions of employment.

Because for many years it has been aware of the long hours and living-in conditions in hotels, the Consumers' League of New York undertook a study of the hotel industry in the summer and fall of 1921 to discover the hours, wages, working and living conditions for women workers in the hotels of New York State.

The material used in the report was obtained by the investigators through their personal experience in working in typical women's jobs in the hotel industry and by applying for work in a number of occupations in hotels and hotel employment offices. The material is necessarily incomplete and uneven though supplemented

wherever possible by interviews with workers in the industry, officials and members of labor unions, employment agencies, etc. The report on wages, hours, and living-in conditions is a statement of the facts and conditions found in the hotels covered.

For the purpose of this investigation a hotel was defined, according to the American Travel and Hotel Directory, as "any building or structure of the better class (whose minimum sized bedrooms are at least 50¢ a night) used or maintained in whole or part for the entertainment of the traveling public or persons of temporary residence; with sleeping rooms furnished for hire with or without meals and (in order not to be confused with lodging or rooming house) maintaining an office or lobby register."

The scope of the investigation was necessarily limited because of the general condition of unemployment in other industries which turned many women to hotel work. The selection of hotels for the study, therefore, depended in a large measure upon the chance availability of jobs for the investigators. An attempt was made, however, to obtain work or apply for work in hotels as representative of the industry as possible. Hotels ranging in size from 25 to 2200 rooms were selected. The commercial hotel, the family apartment type, hotels featuring conventions and social functions—both transient and residential hotels were included. No resort or seasonal hotels were chosen.

It was found that the hotel industry centers in cities according to their size. The cities of New York State were classified according to population into first class cities of over 175,000; second class cities of from 50,000 to 175,000; and third class cities of less than 50,000 population. It proved to be far more difficult to secure employment in second and third class cities than in first class cities. In smaller centers this was in part due to the greater stability of the labor force and in the case of industrial cities to the unemployment situation. In cities of a few controlling industries, which had closed down, the hotel housekeepers invariably answered an inquiry

for work with the statement that the works had shut down and so they had long waiting lists for all jobs.

The investigators applied for work in 96 hotels in New York State.

First class cities	47
Buffalo	12
New York and Brooklyn	25
Rochester	10
Second class cities	28
Albany	7
Binghamton	3
Schenectady	4
Syracuse	8
Utica	6
Third class cities	21
Elmira	2
Hudson	2
Ithaca	2
Kingston	2
Newburgh	3
Troy	4
Oswego	2
Poughkeepsie	4
Total	96

Work was secured in sixteen hotels, fourteen of which were in first class cities, one in Rochester, two in Buffalo, and eleven in New York and Brooklyn. One job was secured in Syracuse, a second class city, and one in Troy, a city of the third class.

It is impossible to give the exact percentage of women to men employed in hotels. A recent survey has been made, however, by the United States Bureau of Occupations Labor Statistics of hotels and restaurants in 26 cities. This report shows that 40% of the employees in hotels and restaurants are women.* The percentage for hotels alone would undoubtedly be larger because men are usually employed as waiters

*United States Bureau of Labor Statistics. Wages of Hotel and Restaurant Employees. 1919. (Advance Release 486, Sept. 31, 1921.)

in the larger restaurants and in restaurants there is no large group of women chambermaids as in hotels.

Of the women in hotels, 56% are in the housekeeping department; 23% in the kitchen, dining room and pantry departments; and 20% in miscellaneous departments.* The miscellaneous departments comprise office employees, laundry workers, elevator, telephone and telegraph operators, seamstresses, wrap checkers and newsstand salesgirls. They have been excluded from this study on the ground that they are not typical of the hotel industry and may be studied under their respective occupations. Since newsstands and checking rooms are usually concessions, the investigators felt they could not be adequately dealt with but should be separately investigated.

More than half of the women workers in hotels are employed in the housekeeping department. 40.2% of the women in hotels are chambermaids, 10% cleaners or bathmaids, 2% linen room girls and 3.8% housekeepers.* Housekeepers have been excluded from this study because of the small percentage and the difficulty in securing information. The study of the housekeeping department, therefore, is confined to chambermaids, cleaners, bathmaids and linen room workers. The investigators worked in 14 jobs in the housekeeping department as chambermaid, bathmaid and linen room worker.

In the kitchen, cooks and assistant cooks are excluded on the ground of number. The information in the kitchen, dining room and pantry departments is, therefore, confined to waitresses and pantry workers. Two jobs were obtained in the kitchen as pantry worker. No work could be obtained as a waitress. All information regarding waitresses was secured from interviews with workers.

During the war the hotels of New York City found that advertisements, private fee-charging employment agencies and bulletins posted at the employees' entrance, were bringing in inadequate returns.

Labor
Recruiting The New York City Hotel Men's Association, therefore, opened its own free employment bureau, which served as a clearing house for all jobs open in

*Minimum Wage Board of the District of Columbia. Wages of Women in Hotels and Restaurants. 1919. P. 10.

hotels belonging to the Association in New York City. One hotel company opened its own employment bureau to recruit workers for the five hotels under its management. This proved to be a temporary expedient only, to be used at a time when the hotels were in need of workers. When unemployment, due to the industrial depression, grew, the free employment bureaus were discontinued. This was at a time when the workers most needed them. The basis for the closing of the employment bureaus was voiced by one employment manager, "We don't need to do that now; we have a long line at the door every day for every job."

At present there is a return to the use of the advertisement and private employment agency. The old, unintelligent method of hiring the first worker in line after a casual interview, whether or not more suitable candidates may be available, is again the practice. In all but five of the hotels in which work was applied for the timekeeper and the head of the department interviewed the worker. It is true that some of the larger hotels in New York City under the control of big hotel corporations have developed employment departments. The employment managers have no labor policy, however. They are little more than clerks. They receive calls from the heads of departments and refer workers to them as they apply. No central record is kept. No job specifications have been worked out and no record is kept of the workers who leave. Even where there are employment managers the actual hiring is done by the heads of departments whose attitude is only too often, "These girls won't stay long anyway, so it doesn't much matter who is hired."

The following example illustrates how unintelligently an interview can be carried on by a housekeeper who was apparently an excellent manager of her department in other respects. The bad psychology and entire lack of employment technique in the interview is obvious. The interview took place in a first class hotel of a first class city in New York State. The girl waited for three-quarters of an hour outside the linen room. Finally, the housekeeper, a robust, emphatic person, came up the stairs. The girl took the initiative:

"Are you the housekeeper?"

"Yes," in a forbidding tone.

"Do you need any chambermaids?" She gave the girl an appraising look. She seemed to suspend judgment temporarily.

"Why, yes," she replied ungraciously, "I do need a steady girl. Are you a floater?"

"No, I'm not a floater," was the quick reply suggested to the girl. The housekeeper looked skeptical, but went on.

"Where've you worked?"

"— in Albany."

"Oh," and she registered faint satisfaction, "that's the same management as this hotel," then, hardening again, "and did you get tired of that?"

"Oh, no," replied the candidate, quick to get her cue, "I liked it. I had to leave when we moved away from there." The housekeeper was mollified.

"You live here now?"

"Yes, I'm goin' to. I ain't got any people. I come from Lake George," showing she was a floater after all.

"You sure you ain't a floater and you'll come Sundays, every Sunday and take your night watches?" suggesting to the girl that she will expect her to be skipping Sunday and watches. "Well, wages is \$10.50 a week, live out, hours 8-3 with night watch every 20th night from 6 to 11 P. M. When can you start?"

"Tomorrow."

"All right, now don't go back on me, will you?" implying that the girls usually do.

Then, as an afterthought, "What's your name?"

"Minnie —, ma'am."

"All right, Minnie, 8 o'clock tomorrow. Now don't you go back on me, mind!"

Now that the hotels' employment agency is no longer open, a girl setting out to look for a job in a New York hotel first looks over the "Help Wanted" column in the New York World. There she may find advertisements such as these:

Wanted:

Chambermaid, with hotel experience, call before to A. M. Hotel —; Live in.

Wanted:

Waitress, young girl, call before to A. M. Hotel —.

Details are seldom given regarding wages or hours. If she is experienced she has a notion as to which are "good houses" so she rates the hotels in her mind and starts out early Monday morning to apply to them for a job.

Failing to find advertisements in the paper—and she does fail very often, for the labor supply in hotels is abundant—she makes the rounds of hotels, tipped off by a friend as to the best places to work. Or she joins the throng which files in and out of the hotel agencies on Sixth Avenue. The agency is usually on the second or third floor of a building with its sign in the doorway on the street floor. Under the sign are daily bulletin boards where the agency posts the "Jobs Open Today." On the one side are jobs for men, on the other jobs for women. The girl stops to pour over these with a motley crew of women, young and old, trim and slattern, of all nationalities.

"Pantry girl	\$40 a month	Live in
Waitress	\$30 a month	Live in
Chambermaid	\$25 a month	Live in,"

she reads. If she finds anything to interest her, she ascends the several flights of dark stairs leading to the agency offices. She finds the employment agency divided into two parts, the men's department and the women's department. Behind a railing at one end is the interviewer of women, seated at a desk, talking to applicants one by one. In front of the railing in groups sit the candidates for jobs. There are neat waitresses, pretty Irish chambermaids, intelligent, mature pantry women, buxom Italian cooks, fat little bathmaids and cleaners, who are beginning to despair of getting a job anywhere. Conversation is animated and loud, often in brogue

and broken English. It concerns disputes between housekeepers and maids, the awful hours and food in some hotels, the Irish question, prohibition, and how foreigners are taking girls' jobs.

Finally the interviewer turns and says, "Come on in. What are you looking for?" and she tells the candidate what jobs she has open and that she must obligate herself to pay the agency 10 per cent of her first month's salary if she gets a job through it. Then the girl gets a card from the interviewer directing her to a job. The employment office is not careful to conserve the worker's time or money. It is a commercial institution bent on profit. It sends her out to a hotel which wanted a chambermaid yesterday or early in the morning, without first telephoning to find out if the job is still open. It even "books" her for a job out-of-town with the most meager information regarding conditions in the hotel, although the worker is required to sign a contract to stay for a definite period of time. So she often finds herself, after visiting the agency, with a day lost, carfare lost and nothing gained, or a job secured which she finds it is impossible to keep because of some unknown disadvantages.

The hotel worker reflects, therefore, before going on a job recommended by the agency, deterred also by the 10 per cent fee. She will look around for herself and return here as a last resort. So she goes the round of the individual hotels again. When she reaches a hotel she walks to the rear hunting the employees' entrance. It is not hard to distinguish. It is indicated by an opening in the sidewalk and a steeply descending flight of iron steps, often circular, leading to the basement or second basement. These are often slippery and dark. They lead into an ill-lighted passage at the bottom, littered with storeroom supplies, old bottles, casks, bags of potatoes, etc. She has not made much progress before she is hailed by the timekeeper from his cage behind the time clock near the door.

"Hey, what do you want," he calls, "a job?" Sometimes he is scarcely so civil. She states her errand; she wants a job as a chambermaid, a waitress or a pantry girl, as the case may be. Sometimes she meets absolute discouragement from

the timekeeper. Sometimes he is more good-natured and directs her to the housekeeper or the steward and shows her the way to the elevator. So she continues along the passage, dodging puddles and dripping pipes.

If she is a chambermaid, she goes to the housekeeper's office or the linen room. There she sits on a bench outside the door waiting audience along with other applying bathmaids and cleaners,—talking again about how awful it is to work in a hotel. When she does see the housekeeper, she is greeted with a roughly appraising look.

"Hotel experience?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"Where?" and "how long?"

But it is her appearance which counts, not her experience. If the candidate is young and nice looking, undeformed, and there is a job open, she will get it. If she is older and getting fat, all the experience in the world will do her no good. Her looks demote her to the bathmaid class and she will find it hard to get a job as that. So she is casual in giving her experience and she is casually hired. She doesn't learn much about the wages and hours or about the food and the room she is to have if she is to live in.

The girl decides to try it out for herself to see if it is "a good house for tips, how much you can pick up from the floor, what the watches are, how hard they work you, and what the grub and rooms are like." If she doesn't make out she'll leave—it doesn't much matter. She would do something else if she got half a chance—but she'll stick to this awhile anyway.

During the first few days in the hotel, she is shoved about and utterly lost. Perhaps no one even asks her name for

several days. She doesn't know where her "station" or her "floor" is and how much territory it covers. She doesn't

know where the time clock is, where to get her meal ticket, where meals are served, where the toilets and dressing rooms are, where to get supplies and bed linen. She fumbles about "lost like" until she learns for her-

self. Sometimes she grows discouraged and leaves in the first few days. Sometimes she finds a friend who shows her around, takes her down to lunch, tells her what the rules are, and introduces her to her friends.

There were, of course, a few exceptions. In several cases rules and regulations were posted in linen closets and pantries and occasionally the housekeeper would put a new worker in charge of another girl to learn the rules. All hotels required the new worker to sign a contract stating that she would obey the rules of the establishment and would allow her baggage to be searched. The contracts seemed meaningless in that in most cases the workers had no way of knowing what the rules and regulations of the hotel were.

As for learning her job, "You're experienced, aren't you? Well, then, you know what to do," and the housekeeper dismisses all responsibility. The idea that

The training of new employees any woman knows how to do chamber work or cleaning is prevalent in the housekeeping department. The girl is left to work alone, then scolded for her mistakes or even discharged without notice. One worker was turned out at 4 o'clock in the afternoon with no money and another girl put in her bed that night because the housekeeper "didn't like the way she swept." In a few exceptional cases the housekeeper taught the new girls by the "you watch me" method.

The failure of hotels to train their employees was pointed out by the United States Federal Board of Vocational Education which had been requested by the American Hotel Association to make an investigation of the possibilities for vocational training in the industry. The report points out that the hotel industry has developed so fast from a home industry that managers have not perfected their organization. Department heads have not been instructed that one of their functions is the training of new workers. The report stresses the fact that training must be based on a clear definition of jobs and that jobs have not yet been analyzed by the management. "As hotel men pay more attention to training and promotion of deserving employees, there will be greater inducement to

capable young people to enter the business. Such opportunities for training and promotion will also lessen the turnover of labor and consequently lessen the cost of operation."* In New York State there seems little indication that hotels have profited by this report.

There was no such thing as a transfer or promotion policy in hotels where work was obtained. The nearest approach to it was found in one hotel where in the
Transfers and Promotion housekeeping department women were sometimes taken on as bathmaids at \$25 a month and later became chambermaids at \$28 a month. There their advancement ceased. Some hotels have rules that no chambermaids may be promoted to linen room workers. There was no cooperation between departments in transferring workers from one department to another.

*L. S. Hawkins, representing the Federal Board of Vocational Education. Vocational Education in the Hotel Business, A Report to the American Hotel Association of the United States and Canada. P. 10.

HOURS

One of the most important conditions of work to the woman hotel employee is the number and distribution of the hours she works. As the hotel industry is a continuous one, most departments operate 18 out of the 24 hours. Within these 18 hours, as has already been pointed out, there are peaks of work when a larger force is necessary. Broken shifts and long and short working days are the result. The working days are made even more irregular by lack of regular lunch periods and regular closing time for those workers who live in the hotel.

The length and distribution of hours is so different for the different departments that it is necessary to discuss the housekeeping department and the kitchen, pantry and dining room departments separately.

Housekeeping Department

The function of the housekeeping department in a hotel is the housing of guests. It has sole charge of the bedroom floors. The function of the women workers in this department is to clean the bedrooms and corridors, to change the linen on the beds, to dust and sweep, supply fresh towels and soap and care for the baths, private and public. The bulk of this work falls in the daylight hours when guests have risen and gone about their business. In the large transient hotels, however, guests are coming into the hotel and leaving it until midnight. Part of the workers must, therefore, be on hand to attend to the incidental wants of the guests and make up new rooms at night.

The women employed in greatest numbers in the housekeeping department are the chambermaids, who clean rooms and make the beds, the bathmaids, who clean and scrub out the bathrooms and corridors and the special cleaners. Of these, the bathmaids' and cleaners' work falls in fairly regular shifts. Bathmaids work a day shift and cleaners, in the big hotels, work a day and a night shift. Chambermaids, on the other hand, have night work distributed among them according to the needs of the establishment.

The work of the bathmaids and the cleaners is, perhaps, the hardest women have to do in hotels. All day long they scrub out wash basins, tubs and toilets, polish brass, and mop up floors on their hands and knees. Their work is of fairly uniform intensity. It is

Bathmaids' and
cleaners' hours

"humiliating work," as one bathmaid said, and for this reason the higher type of maid refuses to take it. The hours of the bathmaids are, however, the best in the housekeeping department. This has led some chambermaids in spite of prejudice against the work to prefer bathmaids' jobs. In thirteen hotels in which work was obtained in the housekeeping department bathmaids worked a nine-hour day or less. The hours of work fell between 7:30 and 5 o'clock. In two hotels, they worked 8½-hour days, 7 hotels a 7½-hour day, in 3 hotels a 7-hour day and in one hotel a 6½-hour day.* Lunch periods were unstandardized, as most of the bathmaids ate in the hotels.

The special cleaners worked the same daily hours as bathmaids. In some hotels there was a squad of night cleaners also who worked from 6 P. M. to 12 midnight, and in the largest hotels there was another shift working from 12 midnight until 7 A. M. No information could be secured concerning these night shifts.

The weekly hours for bathmaids in the hotels varied from 45 to 54 hours. In five of the nine hotels for which weekly hours were obtained bathmaids were required to work from 45 to 50 hours a week and in four hotels from 50 to 54 hours a week. The weekly hours for bathmaids are long in spite of a fairly short working day because they work a seven-day week. The Sunday hours are shorter than hours for week days, varying from 5½ to 7 hours. Sunday work for bathmaids seems unnecessary. The guests stay in their rooms late Sunday morning and do not wish to be disturbed by cleaning. Bathmaids are used to clean outmaids' closets and corridors and to take the places of the chambermaids who have failed to report for Sunday work. Because they have no regular

*The hours given are exclusive of the lunch period. One-half hour has been deducted in computing the daily hour schedules.

work to do on Sunday, bathmaids highly resent the imposition of Sunday work. As their work is of an especially fatiguing nature they believe they are entitled to one day of rest. "It's mean to call you in on Sunday and keep you sitting around when you might be home resting or off having a good time," they would say. In three of the hotels bathmaids were given two days off a month or every other Sunday.

The large majority of workers in the housekeeping department are chambermaids. The hours of work for chambermaids are the most unstandardized of those of any occupation in the hotel. They vary greatly from establishment to establishment. Different maids in the same hotel work different hours, and hours differ for each maid on successive days of the week. This has made it difficult to give a general statement of the working hours of chambermaids.

In transient hotels chambermaids work a daily shift in which they change the linen, dust, and sweep in an assigned number of rooms. This work falls within a fairly regular period. In addition they take turns at being on watch in the morning from 7 o'clock to 8, in the afternoon from 4 to 6 o'clock, and at night from 6 to 12 o'clock, or 6 to 10, according to the establishment. Maids have an irregular lunch period also, except a small minority in a few hotels who were found to take an hour and go home. The workers leave the floor in many hotels when they have finished their daily work often several hours earlier than the leaving time scheduled. On the other hand, they are often kept beyond the scheduled leaving hour because there is a shortage of linen and they must wait for it in order to make up their rooms.

Extra shifts or watches occur in frequencies of from one watch every twentieth night to one watch every morning, afternoon or evening. In two hotels no night watch for the regular chambermaids occurred. A relief watch of maids was added to the staff to work from 6 to 12 o'clock. In one of the hotels this was installed as an economy measure. In several other hotels night watches were made optional and extra pay was received by a maid for each watch taken. Under this sys-

tem some maids, in order to increase their earnings, might overtax their strength. Night watch in the smaller cities lasted only until 10 o'clock and occurred at less frequent intervals.

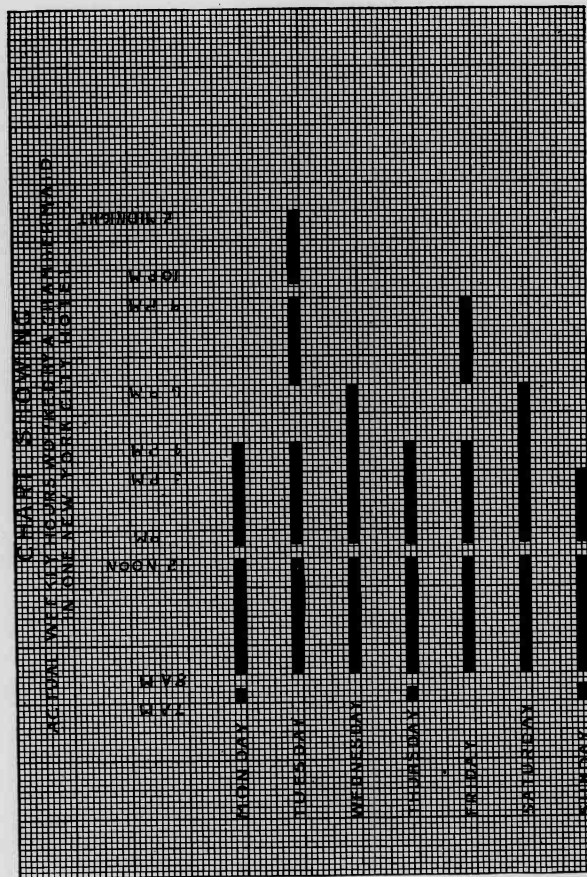
When a girl complains of long hours, the housekeeper usually replies that there is a nice short day on Sunday. The maids do not take this as a great consolation, for they regard one full day's rest in seven as their right. In all but two hotels in which jobs were held, a straight seven-day week was worked by all chambermaids. The Sunday hours were shorter, workers usually leaving at 2 P. M. instead of 4 P. M. In the other two hotels two days off each month were allowed. These days off were most irregularly given, however, at the discretion of the housekeeper. If there was a shortage of maids, there were no days off. One worker in one of these hotels said she had been there two months and had worked every day.

In 12 of the 14 hotels* in which jobs were obtained as chambermaids the regular daily shift varied from 6½ hours to 8½ hours, exclusive of the lunch period. The regular weekly shifts varied from 45½ to 59½ hours. *But the extra shifts make the weekly hours worked by chambermaids excessively long.* The average number of hours worked weekly in "extra watches" varied from none to 21.04 hours. The actual working hours for chambermaids, by which is meant the regular weekly hours plus the average number of extra hours each week, in the 12 hotels, are as follows:

49.38	54.50
50.16	56.70
50.75	59.27
50.94	60.90
52.50	66.54
52.50	70.03

In no case is a 48-hour week found, and it can be seen that in over half of the hotels chambermaids worked more than 54 hours.

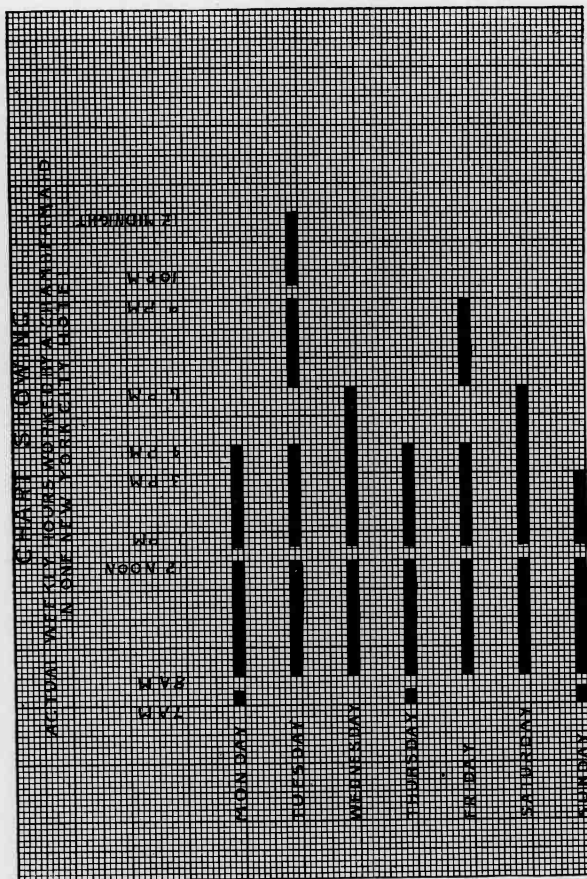
*Two hotels have been omitted from the analysis of hours because of inadequate information on extra shifts.



The chart on the opposite page shows the weekly hours actually worked by chambermaids in one sample hotel in New York City. Beside her regular hours the chambermaid had the morning watch from 7 to 8 A. M., with time allowed for her to run down and eat her breakfast. The second day there was a long watch from 6 P. M. to 12 P. M., the following day a short afternoon watch from 4 to 6 P. M., and every third afternoon after four o'clock she had to herself.

Linen room workers worked a long and short day. They usually reported at 8 o'clock and worked until 11 or 12 o'clock one day. They were then off until 6 and worked until 12 midnight. The next day they worked from 12 noon to 6 P. M.

In all hotels where "extra watches" were worked the maids felt the strain of the excessive hours. On days on which an extra watch from 6 to 12 was worked, a maid was on her feet from 8 to 4, then with two hours' respite from 6 to 12, or 14 hours a day, with short intervals off for meals. She came to her work the next day with dragging step and a listless air, complaining that she never got rested. Her habits of life were disturbed by the irregularity of hours for succeeding days. She snatched sleep when she could. After work maids always went to their rooms to rest until supper time. Workers living out frequently kept beds in the hotel on which to snatch sleep. The work is indoors in an overheated hotel. Excessive hours prevent the maids from getting sufficient exercise in the fresh air. It is impossible to keep in good physical condition under such working conditions. The maids age prematurely. "Oh, you think I am an old woman. I am only thirty. You'll look like me, too, if you stay here long." Similar statements were made by several of the maids. The bathmaids particularly were a jaded and fatigued group of women workers. The older ones in New York City were



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bent from constant stooping. Even strong, young Polish girls, who were frequently found working as bathmaids in up-state cities, were so tired out at night that they spent their evenings lying on their beds.

The complaint of maids regarding hours of work was general. In several hotels there had been an organized protest to the manager against a seven-day week. In one hotel, with the help of a union, maids were organized and the night watch was abolished. For the most part, however, complaint took the form of individual grumbling, dissatisfaction, and changing of jobs. One worker greeted a new worker as she came into her bedroom sick after a night watch on a very hot night, "They work you like dogs here, you better not stay." "I was so tired last night I could have cried," said another worker. "My feet were all swollen this morning. These night watches will kill me yet." Many complained of sore feet and varicose veins from continual standing. Of the seven-day week, one young maid said, "You don't mind so much in the winter time, but in the summer to see everybody going off to the country and you working all day indoors in a hot, stuffy hotel, with never a day to go anywhere or see your family—it's terrible."

The hotel which installed a relief night shift for chambermaids as an economy measure, was wise. After observing the overtired, listless maids skimp their work the day following a long night watch, one cannot but conclude that long hours of work for women are a bad business policy. The tired worker not only does poor work herself, but she demoralizes the other more alert workers on the force. "Just make up the beds with the sheets that's on 'em. Those people aren't going out today anyway. Give the rooms a lick and a promise, I say. I'm tired today," is often heard while the maids are eating lunch. A feeling of resentment against long hours tends to make the workers dissatisfied and careless about their work. All feeling of responsibility for good work is diminished accordingly.

Effect of long hours on efficiency

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In order to mollify maids, housekeepers allow them to leave their stations as soon as they have covered the work on their daily shift. This makes for hastily finished work and a further unstandardized day. It means that, instead of all maids getting a regular number of hours off duty, clever and unscrupulous individuals steal time at the expense of others. The effect of long hours on attendance is marked. Maids frequently take days off without pay. Some make a practice of turning up for Sunday work several times a month only. And after the continued strain of some months of night watches and seven-day week work, maids feel they "need a vacation and a change" and leave their jobs.

Maids who live in a hotel go out little unless they are very young. After working hours they lie on their beds and sleep

or gossip. When they do leave the hotel it is either to go to mass or to find some exciting form of amusement. The younger girls made

"dates" casually with guests and other men to go to the movies and Coney Island. Girls who are more backward had often been nowhere outside the hotel, except to church. A Danish girl, who was working in a large New York City hotel, said she knew no one in New York City and had not been anywhere except to go to church with another maid one Sunday and she wouldn't go there again because they all laughed at her when she took off her hat. She said she was too tired to go to the movies at night because these night watches were "fierce"—she was just tired all the time. She worked in one of the hotels which had an extra watch every day. Another worker, a young Polish bathmaid, complained, "I am too tired to ever go home and see my people any more at night. I used to go every other night and I get awful lonesome for them now, but I just can't get cleaned up and dress." This girl was sixteen and had been working as a bathmaid for three months. Another young bathmaid said, "I am too tired to ever go to dances. I just want to rest at night. I can't stand it anyway, it's too hard."

Effect of long hours on recreation

Dining-Room, Kitchen and Pantry Departments

The work of the waitress in a hotel reaches its peak at meal hours and slackens between times. For this reason waitresses work "broken shifts." The daily and weekly hours of the waitresses interviewed were not as unstandardized or as excessive in length as hours for chambermaids. They worked a six-day week in all cases. But the distribution of hours of work in broken shifts caused great inconvenience to the workers. Those who lived in were apathetic but those who lived out and wished to return home after hours of work complained bitterly. If the worker lives any distance from the hotel it is impossible for her to change her clothes twice, allow time for street car ride, and return to work in the rest period allowed between the morning and the evening shift. There is, besides, the expense of extra carfare to be considered.

In one New York City hotel, according to a woman worker's statement, she reported for work at 11 A. M. and worked till 4 P. M. She then left her station for 1½ hours' rest and returned at 5.30 to work until 9 P. M. She ate her meals and changed her clothes upon her own time. She complained that she could not go home in the afternoon because she lived too far away to change to street clothes twice and allow for car rides. The hotel had a rest room where she stayed for the 1½-hour rest period. "Of course," she said, "it is wasted time." She worked no overtime, but the work was heavy during the hours in which she worked so that she was often too tired and nervous to eat her meals.

In another hotel a worker stated that she worked broken shifts one week in the day time and straight shifts the next week when she was on night work. One week she worked from 6 A. M. to 11 A. M., had a rest period from 11 A. M. to 6 P. M., and worked 6 P. M. to 9 P. M. The next week she worked from 5.30 P. M. until 12 P. M. She ate her meals on her own time, but changed her clothes on working time. Overtime varied from 1 to 1½ hours a day.

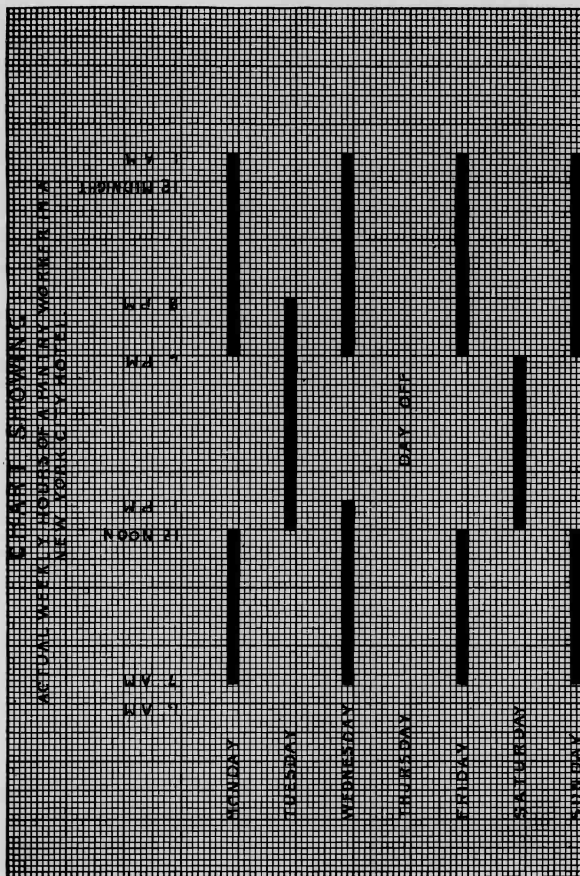
In the third hotel for which information was secured the

waitresses lived in. The work was divided into three shifts; from 6.30 A. M. to 8.30 A. M., from 10.30 A. M. to 2.30 P. M., and from 5.30 P. M. to 7.30 P. M. This makes an 8-hour day if only the hours actually worked are counted in.

In the kitchen and pantry the hours range from 8 to 9 daily with a six-day week. Here again the broken shifts and the long and short day were found. In the two hotels where hours of pantry maids and kitchen help jobs were obtained in the kitchens and pantries, there were two groups of women dishwashers, a day shift and a night shift. The day shift worked from 7 A. M. to 4 P. M., or an 8½-hour day, exclusive of ¼ hour for lunch. The night shift worked from 4 P. M. to 1 A. M., or an 8½-hour day. They worked six days, or a 51-hour week.

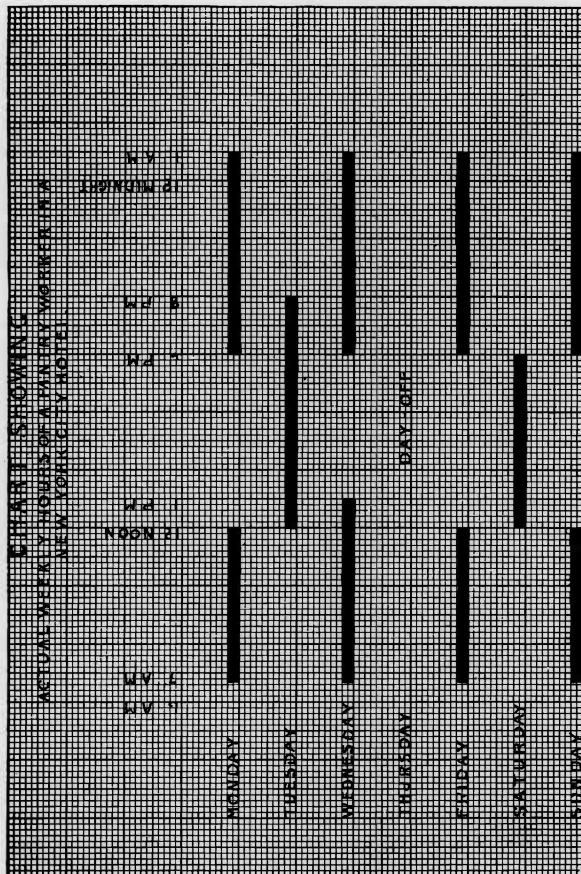
The other workers in the pantry and kitchen of one of these hotels worked broken shifts. The workers had rotating shifts with a long day and then a short day. On the day before the weekly day off, each worker worked a 12 or 13-hour day. The irregularity of a pantry worker's hours and the distribution over a seven-day period, is shown on the chart on the following page. The length of working hours for the worker in this instance ranged from 6 to 13 hours daily. On days on which the long shift was worked, the hours were distributed over a period of 18 hours. The total weekly hours of this pantry worker were 63. The two other pantry workers in this hotel worked a 56-hour week and a 60-hour week, respectively. Since a girl always worked a long day of 12 to 13 hours before her free day, she was unable to derive full benefit from it because of fatigue.

As the other hotel in which a pantry job was held was much larger, pantry and kitchen work was more specialized. There were pantry maids, coffee women, butter and cream women, and vegetable women. The butter and cream women and the pantry maids (salad girls) had the most irregular shifts. Two pantry maids worked a straight shift from 7 A. M. to 4 P. M. or a 9-hour day; two worked broken shifts from 8 A. M. to 2 P. M. and from 6 P. M. to 8 P. M., or an 8-



hour day; and one worked from 4 P. M. to 1 A. M., a 9-hour day. These women ate their meals on the job so no time has been deducted for lunch hours.

Broken shifts distributed over a long period of time with scheduled hours of work changing from day to day are a great hardship to the woman worker. Aside from the fact that two hours in the middle of the afternoon are useless to a woman if she must dress and take a car to go home, and take a car to return and dress again on reaching the hotel, broken shifts mean that meals and sleep must be snatched at irregular intervals. Such a hit or miss existence, with no regular hours for work, rest and recreation, does not make for the physical well-being of the worker.



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WAGES

When taking a position in a hotel the woman worker bargains as an individual for the wages she is to receive. She is without the support of a labor organization which would have set a standard for her occupation and would assist her in maintaining it. She applies for work in an industry where the wage scales are determined largely by the inclination of the hotel managers and by the labor supply. She must go from hotel to hotel to learn what is being paid, for the wage opportunities vary from establishment to establishment.

She cannot even estimate the value of the wage she is to receive in the majority of jobs. This is due to two uncertain elements in the earnings of hotel workers; tipping and compensation other than money in the form of board and room. Because she is not in a position to gauge the amount of the tips she will receive and the quality of the board and lodging, the only recourse of the applicant is to try out the job for a time. "Well, I'll try it out for a week and see how I make out," is the common expression of the new worker. If it is not a good house for tips, if she can't eat the food, and if the living-in conditions are unbearable, she will go somewhere else and try again. By trying out job after job she loses time and greatly decreases her yearly earnings.

Cash Wages

In the smaller hotels of New York City and the hotels of the smaller cities of the State, a straight cash wage was paid to women workers in all occupations.

Wages when the workers live out The wages of chambermaids and bathmaids varied from \$8.77 a week to \$16 in the 46 hotels where wage rates were obtained. Of these, the one hotel paying \$8.77 a week was the largest hotel of a second class city where two large factories employing great numbers of women had closed down. The housekeeper said, "The works have shut down, so you can get workers at any price." The one hotel paying \$16 a week employed only three maids on a long-hour schedule.

The straight cash wages paid to chambermaids and bathmaids in the 46 hotels are as follows:

1	paid at least \$ 8 but less than \$ 9 per week
9	" " " 9 " " " 10 " "
11	" " " 10 " " " 11 " "
9	" " " 11 " " " 12 " "
11	" " " 12 " " " 13 " "
2	" " " 13 " " " 14 " "
2	" " " 14 " " " 15 " "
0	" " " 15 " " " 16 " "
1*	" " " 16 " " " 17 " "

Few women workers were employed in the kitchens and pantries of these hotels. No waitresses were employed.

A comparison of these wage rates may be made with the minimum wage fixed for hotel workers in 1919 in the District of Columbia where the cost of living is comparable to that of New York State. The Minimum Wage Board of the District of Columbia decided that a wage of \$16.50 a week was the minimum on which a self-supporting woman could live. In no case do the hotels investigated in New York State pay this minimum when a straight cash wage is paid and the workers do not live in the hotels. It can be seen from these figures that 40 of the 46 hotels pay between \$9 and \$13 or an average of \$11 per week.

In six hotels at which jobs were applied for, lodging was offered, but no meals. The following cash wages were offered to chambermaids and bathmaids in addition to lodging:

Wages including lodging but no meals

1	paid at least \$ 8 but less than \$ 9 per week
3	" " " 9 " " " 10 " "
1	" " " 10 " " " 11 " "
1	" " " 11 " " " 12 " "

No information was obtained for pantry workers or waitresses in this group.

*The actual wage paid in this group was \$16.00.

The Minimum Wage Board of the District of Columbia, in extending its minimum wage of \$16.50 to hotel workers who were living-in, attempted to set a money value on the board and lodging furnished by the hotel. Because there was no way of determining its actual cost to the hotel management, the minimum cost of room and board for a self-supporting woman in the District of Columbia was taken. The figure used is \$9 a week for board and lodging; two-thirds or \$6 for board, and one-third or \$3 for lodging.* \$13.50 is, therefore, the minimum on which a woman can maintain herself while living-in in a hotel but taking her meals outside. None of the hotels in New York State, furnishing lodging in addition to a cash wage, paid this minimum.

In 8 hotels which paid the workers their wage, plus three meals a day, the following cash wages were paid to chambermaids and bath-
Wages including three meals and no lodging maids:

1	paid at least \$ 6 but less than \$ 7 per week
0	" " " 7 " " " 8 " "
1	" " " 8 " " " 9 " "
5	" " " 9 " " " 10 " "
1**	" " " 10 " " " 11 " "

No information was obtained for pantry workers or waitresses in this group.

If the \$16.50 minimum wage of the District of Columbia is taken, and \$6 to cover the cost of three meals deducted, the minimum wage for this group would be \$10.50. In no case was this amount received.

The largest New York City hotels and the largest hotels

*Minimum Wage Board of the District of Columbia. Wages of Women in Hotels and Restaurants in the District of Columbia. P. 16.

**The actual wage paid in this group was \$10.00.

in first class cities require maids to live in and prefer that some of the pantry workers and waitresses should do so. In these hotels chambermaids and bath-
Wages including board and lodging maids living-in have the follow-

ing wage rates:

1	paid at least \$ 4 but less than \$ 5 per week
7	" " " 5 " " " 6 " "
17	" " " 6 " " " 7 " "
1	" " " 7 " " " 8 " "
2	" " " 8 " " " 9 " "
1	" " " 9 " " " 10 " "

If \$9 for board and lodging is deducted from the \$16.50 minimum wage of the District of Columbia, \$7.50 is left as the minimum wage for this group of workers. When the wages of chambermaids living-in are taken, it will be noted that only four out of twenty-nine hotels pay this wage or more, and that over half pay between \$6 and \$7 per week.

Waitresses in one hotel in New York City where board and room are furnished received \$6.92 a week. Pantry workers, who are a skilled class, received one of the highest wage rates found for women workers in hotels. They have, however, no access to tips. In one hotel they received \$50 a month with board and lodging, or \$11.53 a week, and in another hotel \$55 a month with board and lodging, or \$12.29 a week. In two hotels kitchen workers received \$30 a month whether they lived in or out.

Tipping

Tips, or the giving of gratuities by the patrons of the hotel to workers who serve them, is the most unstandardized part of the earnings of the worker. Because the giving of tips depends not only on the whim of the public but upon the general prosperity of the country and the individual prosperity of the patron, it admits of no standardization. Tipping seems incongruous in that, by its own definition, the function

of the hotel is service. It amounts to a direct payment by the public of a part of the worker's wage.

It should be remembered that tips are received by chambermaids and waitresses only. There are large numbers of bathmaids, cleaners, pantry and kitchen help who have no access to tips.

The practice of tipping is defended by both workers and managers, although it operates to the disadvantage of both.

The disadvantages of tipping

The management defends tipping on the ground that the public wishes to tip. "He feels the servant has given something extra and unexpected and he wants to pay something for it—he tips."* This manager indirectly admits, however, that tipping is an imposition on the patron when he assures his guests that no discourtesy will be shown a guest who does not tip. If managers were candid they might admit that they wish the public to tip because it enables them to pay their employees a lower wage rate.

Patrons are frequently annoyed by the persistency of workers in procuring tips. The guest who tips will get service at the expense of the guest who doesn't—maids are frank to admit this—and there is consequently dissatisfaction of one class of guests. A guest in a hotel has come to feel that the hotel rate is but one item in the expense of staying there and naturally he resents it.

Between the workers and their superiors disputes arise over the distribution of tips. Dissatisfaction and lack of cooperation result which obstruct the smooth functioning of departments. Chambermaids designate desk clerks as "sneaking devils," because they think the desk clerk takes their tips. They hate the bell-boys because they think they get more than their share of tips. Waitresses, especially banquet waitresses, have a constant grudge against head waiters. They think they hold back a large share of tips from them. Maids resent it when housekeepers give them transient cor-

*Statler Service Codes. P. 7.

ridors where tips are poor, and waitresses accuse head waiters of putting them on poor stations.

Tips are a disadvantage to the worker because she can never know what her weekly earnings are to be and plan her expenses accordingly. But she defends tipping because she feels that this is the only part of her earnings over which she has control. She knows her wage rate will be low, but she may get big tips through her own efforts. The uncertainty of the amount of tips has a romantic fascination for the maid or waitress. She thinks that by an ingratiating manner to the guest, by staying overtime to be on the spot when a guest leaves, by her persistence, and by chance of securing a good floor or station she will get tipped. Moreover, she has heard many stories of good tips. Maids and waitresses boast of the good tips they receive and remain silent when they get none. Each maid hopes that she will be the lucky one. But she comes to realize reluctantly that she cannot control tips. She may not get a good floor if she is a chambermaid but one on which transients stop for one night and are never seen. In modern hotels the "regulars" stop on the higher floors. She may not obtain favor with the housekeeper or the desk clerk or the head waiter. She may be at lunch or supper when a guest leaves. She may be growing old and the guest will not be pleased by her manner. The lot of the older chambermaid who is in many respects more efficient than the younger one, is especially hard. She does not get tips and she ceases to expect them. This discrimination against the experienced worker illustrates the unfairness of tips as a part of the workers' wage. Tips depend not so much on service as on a pleasing appearance and manner. Advice to a new maid is to "fix yourself up" and "don't be bashful. The ones who get tips are those who stick around and sass 'em back and make them notice you." There is a question as to how many of the tips received are legitimate tips. The danger to a young girl, who ingratiates herself with the guests to get tips, is only too evident. The girls often said to those who got no tips, "Oh, you're too straight to make good tips. Make up to them."

The dissatisfaction of the maid who gets low tips grows and finally she leaves her job. An employment manager of a

large group of hotels in New York City said, "From my experience as employment manager, I am thoroughly convinced that the tipping system is more directly responsible for labor turnover in hotels than any other one thing. An employee will leave one hotel to go to another where exactly the same wages are paid if she thinks the chance for tips is better."

Tipping, as a factor in the workers' earnings, has been generally overestimated. A study, made by the United States

The relation of tipping to wages

Bureau of Labor Statistics during the war period when tipping was comparatively high, shows that the average tip for a chambermaid in Buffalo was 40¢ a day and the highest was only 71¢. In New York City the average tip received by the chambermaids was 49¢ and the highest tip 83¢.* The Minimum Wage Board of the District of Columbia in 1919 says of tipping: "Of the 48 maids from whom data on this point were obtained, 8 stated that they received no tips, 7 stated the amount to be very little and the average for those giving actual figures was \$1.22 per week. It seems evident that the tips received by maids were not sufficient to make any appreciable addition to their wages."**

Certainly in New York State, according to the data gathered from this investigation, tipping for chambermaids is negligible. It is difficult to get an accurate estimate from maids as to their average weekly tips. They remember a \$5 tip they once got but not how much they get each week. In one of the largest New York hotels, one maid says she gets \$5 once in a while, then nothing for weeks at a time. One had had \$3 in the three months she had worked in the hotel. Another made 50 cents in 5 days. The investigators, while working in hotels, received less than \$1 a week in New York City hotels and in the other hotels of New York State only an occasional small tip of from 15 to 25 cents. It may have been due in part to the fact that as new maids they worked

*Monthly Labor Review, September 1919. Wages and Hours of Hotel and Restaurant Employees. P. 193.

**Minimum Wage Board of the District of Columbia. Wages of Women in Hotels and Restaurants. 1919. P. 5.

on corridors for transients and not for permanent guests. Their experience, however, was borne out by statements of other maids. There was constant complaint that tips were low. In up-state cities maids said, "You never expect tips from travelling men any more. Only when a play actress or somebody like that comes from New York you get a tip." In New York City also there was complaint that "houses are no good for tips now" and "no rich people come any more."

Waitresses, the few whom it was possible to interview, received much larger tips than maids. It is more customary to tip waitresses and they are always on the spot to receive their tips. Waitresses interviewed received from \$3 to \$5 a day in tips. They form, however, a minority of women hotel workers and their position in the industry is precarious, due to the antagonism of the men waiters.

That a hotel can be run without tips has been demonstrated by a women's hotel in Washington, D. C., in which a minimum wage of \$16.50 is paid. A group of restaurants in New York City realizing the unfairness of the tipping system, has attempted a standardization of tips. The patron pays a 10% service charge with his bill, which per cent goes to the waiter at the end of the week. This seems entirely satisfactory to the worker in that it makes for a certainty of tips, but the pernicious principle underlying the tipping system persists.

Living-in

The other uncertain element in a woman hotel worker's earnings is the board and lodging offered as a part of her wage. When a girl takes a job she does not see her room and has no notion of what the food is like. If she is an experienced worker she does not expect much.

All women cannot make use of the board and lodging offered in a hotel. It depends upon the conditions of their personal life. Married women or

Living-in a disadvantage to women with dependents women with dependents are barred. So, in some hotels, where the same wage is offered to workers living in or out, married women and women

with children are forced to accept the cash wage without the board and lodging. Often this worked great hardship to the women whose husbands were out of work. It was difficult, too, for the woman with dependents for whom she had to maintain a home. A number of widows with children were forced to accept the low cash wage. Finding that this wage would not support them, many of them put their children in institutions and lived in. They felt, on the whole, that this was a highly unsatisfactory solution. With night work and a seven-day week, maids could rarely see their children.

The cost of board and room to employees, furnished as it is upon a large scale, is without doubt much less than the cost of the same if purchased retail by the employee. In order to judge the value of board and lodging which is offered by the hotel, it is necessary to have some standards by which to measure it. Hotels have made no attempt to put a money value on lodging and board. The only way an estimate can be made of the cost to hotels is by the difference in wages paid to employees living in and those living out in the same establishment. Even this means is scarcely accurate because, in some cases, the same wage is paid to both and a varying number of meals is eaten by the employees.

Money value placed upon food and lodging by the hotels

A few instances can be given, however. In three hotels where one group of employees have meals and lodging and where the group living out took no meals in the hotel, there was a difference in the wage between the two groups. The difference which may be said to be the value placed by the hotels on food and lodging was, in the three hotels, \$2.30, \$3.04 and \$3.46, respectively.

In seven hotels where one group lived in and one group roomed out but ate in, the wage difference illustrates the value set by the hotel upon lodging. The difference in wages varied from \$1 a week to \$2.31 a week.

In the hotels of up-state cities Polish maids are beginning to replace the American workers. One employment manager said, "We like these foreigners. They don't

Living on a hotel wage expect to spend so much money, and they'll put up with more." Again and again the complaint was heard that the hotel wages were insufficient to live on, even when food and lodging were included. Many of the workers found it necessary to buy food in addition to that provided by the hotel in order to keep their health. Those who did not live in the hotels were unable, because of the irregular hour schedules, to take advantage of the cheaper rates of boarding houses for meals. In most cases they had no family connections on which they could depend. They were forced, therefore, to buy their meals at restaurant prices or else to cook them themselves. Workers, whose wage included three meals but no lodging, were not always able to take advantage of the meals offered. So it happened that waitresses and pantry maids, when their day began in the afternoon, often had only one meal in the hotel. Again, if they had family responsibilities, they could often not reach the hotel in time for breakfast. If a maid's day ended early she lost time by staying for supper in the hotel. The result is that many workers eat the noon meal only in the hotel and provide the other meals at their own expense when they are rooming out.

Most of the hotel workers prefer to live out. "You like a room by yourself which you know is clean. These hotel rooms have so many girls in them, and they're all kinds." But those who do live out experience the difficulty of paying rent out of their small wage. One girl, who worked in a New York hotel for \$35 a month and meals, had to pay \$25 a month for her room. "Of course," she said, "I can't live on that."

A worker in a Rochester hotel, a widow with three children all living at home, earned \$10.50 a week with no board or lodging. She said her eldest son was a printer who was out on strike. "He gets \$19 a week strike pay," she said, "while I get \$10.50 a week for working 7 days. Of course my pay doesn't make me independent. It just helps along. It doesn't go far when you have to buy your own shoes and shoes for a

12-year-old boy." One woman, who received \$50 a month and lived out, worked all day in the hotel and then packed candy every evening from 6 to 10 o'clock to make enough money to live on. She had a family to support. Another intelligent American woman, earning \$10 a week, was keeping her sick husband in one room for which she paid \$8 a month. She had one bed and a table. The rest of the furniture was packing boxes. She had to prepare all the meals in her spare time.

Aside from food and rent, clothing is the largest item in the hotel workers' budget. Both a uniform for work and street clothes are needed. The uniform was furnished by the hotel in only the largest New York City hotels. When charged to the worker it cost about \$4.00. She must also furnish, if a chambermaid or waitress, a black waist and skirt for night work. This waist usually costs from \$2.00 to \$2.50 and the skirt at least \$5.00. The waitress needs a number of clean white shirtwaists. Shoes are an important item to both chambermaids and waitresses who are on their feet all their working hours and must be neatly and comfortably shod. Workers complained that they need shoes every three months and that they cost at least \$6 a pair.

After the necessary uniforms and a meagre supply of street clothing are paid for, there is little left from the wage for incidentals and to meet emergencies. Doctors and dentists are rarely consulted except in several large hotels where doctors and dentists are employed by the hotel and where workers can have attention at reduced rates. Women workers neglected their teeth through poverty and ignorance. The older bathmaids and maids frequently had only a few snags left. An oculist was an unheard-of expense. Few of the older workers wore glasses even when they had the greatest difficulty in seeing. Some used magnifying glasses to read the newspapers, and others could not read print at all because of the condition of their eyes. Magazines and newspapers were a luxury. Workers never bought them and read only what was given them by guests. Books were never seen. The workers seemed to have neither the energy nor the money for any kind of self-improvement. The younger girls could

frequently find someone to take them out for amusement, but for the older workers there was no recreation at all. They complained that they could save nothing for their old age.

How many guests, who pay from \$4.50 to \$9 a day for their rooms, know that *less than 6¢* of this goes in cash to the chambermaid for her services? In one hotel where these rates are paid, chambermaids receive \$300 a year or, allowing for two days off per month and a week's vacation, a little less than 90¢ for a working day. This is for cleaning fifteen rooms. And yet we are told it is for service that we pay so dearly in hotels!

LIVING-IN CONDITIONS

The living-in conditions described in this report are the conditions found by the workers who made the investigation. They lived in ten hotels. These included some of the largest hotels in New York City where a proportion of the women workers always live in.

The food for maids and other women workers is served in "Helps' Hall." When the worker offers to take the new maid "down" to lunch she means it literally. Usually

Food it is in the second basement underground.

Through labyrinths, ill-lighted and heated, sometimes dripping from pipes overhead, she finally arrives at "Helps' Hall." Sometimes she finds it next to a basement laundry which is always steaming hot. As the worker enters, she faces a long row of steam tables. She has her meal ticket punched, grabs a tray, and gets in line. There is no choice of food. Her tray is filled with soup, meat, potatoes and pudding and she deposits it on one of the deal tables in the room and seats herself with the rest on a bench without a back. If she comes late, there is often a litter of spilled food and dirty dishes on the table which take away her appetite. There is a rattle of tin knives and forks. Usually only maids and other women workers are eating in the dining hall, although in small hotels men and women eat at different tables in the same room.

In the hotels in which the workers lived in, they found the dining-room service always hurried. Soup was usually spilled and too much sugar put in the coffee. In one smaller hotel in New York City where men and women ate together workers waited on themselves. All cut their bread from the same loaf, dished out meat at the steam tables, often with the help of their fingers, and poured their own milk. A late worker coming to lunch found messed-over remains of food which had been fingered by many unwashed hands of porters, laundrymen, maids and cleaners.

The quantity of food served was sufficient. Plates were well filled, second helpings were often allowed, tea, coffee,

milk, bread and butter were always plentiful. Desserts usually "ran out," but desserts were considered a luxury anyway. The quality of food was inferior. Poor cuts of meat and leftovers in the form of stew and hash with cold bologna for supper was the usual meat diet. Tinned vegetables, carrots, beans and macaroni without cheese were customary. Boiled potatoes were the mainstay. Rice, in different forms, was always served. Rice and bread puddings were the favorite desserts. Butter was often oleomargarine and milk was thin and blue. Fresh vegetables, fresh salads and fruit never appeared even in midsummer. It is true salads and melons were sometimes served, but they were wilted, and workers would not touch them. Ice cream, a very skimmed-milk ice cream, was served once a week on Sundays. Stale French pastries and sour chocolate eclairs sometimes appeared.

The following menus for "Helps' Hall" in a New York hotel illustrate the unvaried, unappetizing and unhealthful food offered. The meals were served on the hottest days of the month of August. Breakfast: Oatmeal, unsalted and with lumps in it, sugar, tea and milk. Lunch: Macaroni without cheese flavored with meat grease, boiled potatoes, bread and corn bread, butter, coffee or tea and unflavored rice pudding. Supper: Fish (which was very strong and unedible), boiled potatoes, bread, butter and tea. Following this supper for lunch the next day there was rice cooked in meat grease with boiled potatoes and stew added. For supper there was stew again, corn bread, coffee, tea and bread pudding flavored with cinnamon.

And so on, every day appeared stew and boiled potatoes during a week of work in this hotel. The workers all complained of the food as not fit to eat. They said, "They don't care what they give you in a hotel. Don't eat most of it, it will kill you. They feed you like dogs here." Many workers did not come to lunch at all. They made a little tea and a sandwich in their rooms. Many others on hot days, after eating such meals, had indigestion and were forced to leave their work. They went out for meals as often as they could, especially for supper. One girl said, "I am so sick of potatoes.

I do want some fresh vegetables and a salad. Of course you can get a real meal sometimes outside, but, Holy God, on our wages!" Another worker was overheard giving advice to a girl who was leaving, "Well, kid, I tell you, it's God's truth this ain't no place for a young American girl like you. When you're young, you can get out. You get into a club, kid, where you get the same grub they eat themselves. Here, the grub will make you old before your time. Look at me, I'm just thirty and I look fifty. If you stay here, you just get used to the food and everything. You see, they're all old ones here. You get out. Now I just eat a little toast and tea some days. What else do they give you? Potatoes! I tell you to get out, though I hate like hell to see you go."

The food served to pantry workers was much better and they could eat salads and fruit if they cared to. They ate on the job, however, and often had no time to eat their lunches. Waitresses in some hotels ate the same grade of food as maids and kitchen help, but they "picked up" extra food on the side.

The lodging furnished women in large hotels was confined to bed space in a dormitory except in a few instances. The bedrooms varied in size, but were everywhere overcrowded. There were from two to ten girls in a room in most hotels. Cots were placed side by side and the only ventilation came from windows at the far end of the room. The rooms were often overheated and ill-ventilated. Several rooms opened on air shafts. In one hotel there were three occupants in a room with one window opening on a narrow airshaft. The air was "vicious" and it was so dark that an electric light was needed to see at noon.

In one hotel a worker, when shown to her room, was told, "This is an awful nice room, not many people in it." It was a room 10 x 20 feet, with six beds, two dressers, no chairs and a row of lockers. There were two small windows at one end of the room. "There are twice as many girls in the room next door," said the guide. A room in a large metropolitan hotel, 18 feet long, 15 feet wide and 10 feet high, housed eight girls. They slept in double-decker beds. There were two large windows and when the weather was hot enough so everyone

was willing to have the windows open, the air was reasonably good. But when it was cold and some one of the eight girls wanted the windows closed, the air in the morning was frightful. Three dressers stood in a curtained space on one side of the room under which the clothes of the eight girls hung together. There was one straight chair apiece. The room was steam-heated, with an electric light hanging from the ceiling. When the girls who slept in the lower berths wanted to read they had to stick their heads out, as the upper berths took away the light. As the girls living in the room worked different shifts, there was always some one asleep, which meant that the rest must keep quiet. A girl coming in at midnight after a night watch had to undress in the dark. One of the maids said, "This room is one of the pleasantest in the house."

In the smaller hotels dormitory rooms were less frequent. In one hotel two girls slept in double decker beds in an 8 x 10 room. In one hotel only were single rooms found, but this hotel had just begun to room its maids and had not yet filled the rooms with two beds apiece.

Beds had adequate linen which was usually clean, though often ragged. Towels and soap were furnished by the hotel in every case. In the larger hotels a maid cared for the rooms and made the beds. In the smaller hotels this was done by the workers, and bedrooms were very carelessly kept. There was an adequate number of baths and toilets in the largest, modern hotels of New York City, although they were often ill-kept and dirty. In the small hotels in New York City and in the hotels of the other cities of the State an inadequate number of baths and toilets were found and the plumbing was poor. Baths were ill-kept and often the hot and cold water faucets were out of order. In some hotels maids were expected to use guests' toilets and showers at odd hours.

Laundry facilities were inadequate except in the largest New York hotels. Maids washed their clothes at night and hung them in their rooms to dry. The damp and unhealthy atmosphere in a bedroom in which wet clothes are hanging can be imagined. In some cases an iron could be secured from the linen room. In others, maids bought their own irons which they attached to electric lights in their rooms. In sev-

eral hotels maids were required to wash their own uniforms under these conditions and often they washed clothes for the guests.

In no hotel in which the investigators worked was there a room in which women workers could receive guests. For social life they were forced outside the hotel to the streets. In only one hotel was there a telephone in the employees' quarters. Three hotels had rest rooms for women workers with comfortable chairs and tables. Two had victrolas and one had a piano in its rest room. No books or magazines were ever found. In the majority of hotels there was not a comfortable chair which women workers living-in could use while off duty. They spent their recreation hours talking on trunks in the halls or lying on the beds in their rooms.

RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the facts set forth in this report, the Consumers' League of New York believes that there is need for *a special code for the hotel industry*. The nature of the work in hotels is such that regulations regarding the length of hours and the distribution of hours in shifts cannot be made to apply to all occupations alike. Separate arrangements, therefore, must be made for chambermaids, pantry workers, waitresses, etc. The Consumers' League recommends that a more intensive and extensive investigation be made by the State Industrial Commission to secure additional information necessary for drafting such a special code.

A Special Code for the Hotel Industry

The recommendations of the Consumers' League as to points which should be considered in drafting a code for the hotel industry follow.

It is recommended that legislation be passed to make it possible to include in the Industrial Code the regulation of hours of work as well as the actual working conditions and conditions under which women hotel workers live in a hotel.

Hours

Women workers should have 24 hours of consecutive rest in every calendar week.

No woman worker should work more than 8 hours in one day or more than 48 hours in one week.

No woman worker should be allowed to work between the hours of 12 midnight and 6 A. M.

Because it is a continuous industry, workers may be permitted to work broken shifts. Not more than two shifts should be worked in one day. For chambermaids and pantry maids there should be at least four hours between shifts in order that the time may be utilized by the worker. For waitresses there should be two shifts with at least four hours between shifts, or three shifts within a spread of thirteen hours.

Each worker should have a scheduled time for meals. At least one-half hour should be allowed for each meal.

Living-in Conditions

The system of living-in should be abolished.

While the living-in system continues, each worker should have a single room or, if two employees are in one room, there should be single beds, not double deckers. Ventilation should be by window. In the case of airshaft, court or area-way there should be a specified number of feet between the window and the opposite wall. The rooms of workers should be located so that they do not get their air from the laundry or kitchen. Each room should be equipped with a sanitary metal bed, clean and sufficient bedding, a locker, closet or dresser where clothes may be kept sanitary and safe, and at least one comfortable chair.

Sanitary conveniences (toilets, showers and tubs) should be separately enclosed. Those for men and women should be remote from each other and plainly marked. Sanitary conveniences should be clean and light, and there should be a sufficient number to each floor for the number of employees using them.

There should be hospital accommodations provided in accordance with the size of the establishment. The room should have beds so that workers who are ill can be segregated from the other employees.

A sitting room should be provided, quiet, with comfortable chairs, where visitors are permitted.

The food served to workers should constitute a well-balanced diet, wholesome, varied, appetizing and sufficient in quantity. It should be served in a well-lighted and aired, quiet and clean dining room.

A Minimum Wage Law

The Consumers' League recommends that a minimum wage law be passed in New York State which shall include the hotels in its application.

Tipping

Tipping should be abolished.

SUGGESTIONS TO HOTEL MANAGERS

It is suggested that it be the duty of special employees to care for the workers' rooms and also to serve the meals, remove the dishes and keep the tables clean in the employees' dining room or cafeteria.

It is suggested that employees be interviewed and hired by a person understanding the technique of the selection of workers and the requirements of the various jobs in the hotel, with the purpose of securing an efficient force of workers and reducing the turnover of labor. An experienced person, preferably a woman, should be responsible for the introduction of the new employee to her job, her training, her transfer or promotion.

The conditions of living-in, while the system is continued, should be under the supervision of a competent woman.

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Box 107

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Hotel
HC Moore 915

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